

CENTRAL SQUARE AND TUDOR STREET INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS



CLIENT

Cardiff City Council



START DATE

Central Square: July 2020
Tudor Street: May 2021



COMPLETION DATE

Central Square: April 2022
Tudor Street: June 2022



VALUE

Central Square: £6.4m
Tudor Street: £2.6m



Knights Brown were awarded the £6.4m Central Square project for Cardiff City Council in March 2020, under Lot 9 of the SE Wales Highways Framework. The project involves highways improvement works in the Central Square development area in Cardiff City Centre.

The project involves improvements to Wood Street as part of the wider city centre regeneration, with the aim of improving sustainability and air quality in the area. The works involve installing a new highway layout that will improve the current bus network, offer improved safety for pedestrians via improved pedestrian crossing facilities and install a network of stepped cycle routes to connect the area with the cycleway network.

In 2021 we were awarded a second £2.6m project, Tudor Street, under Lot 8 of the Framework. Tudor Street is directly adjacent to the Central Square site and extends the highways improvements to the west along a key route into the city centre.

WORKING IN THE CITY CENTRE

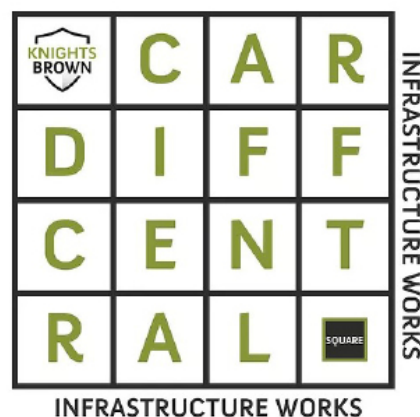
The site is in an extremely busy location and liaison with a range of stakeholders will be crucial to the success of the project.

We have appointed a dedicated Public Liaison Officer (PLO) for the project, who is supporting the site team in managing the stakeholder liaison process. We

began stakeholder engagement during the preconstruction phase, holding meetings with affected stakeholders to ensure that their needs were understood and taken into account when planning and delivering the works.

Traffic management is of key importance on these schemes; we worked with our traffic management subcontractor to prepare detailed Traffic Management Plans at tender stage, including managing vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, maintaining access to businesses and for events being held in the Stadium.

We held dedicated workshops with local residents and businesses, attended by our PLO, site team and our Traffic Safety Control Officer to ensure proposals were understood and to incorporate stakeholder needs as far as possible.





The site is also located near to Principality Stadium; a key constraint is that we must remove any temporary traffic management works a day prior to any Stadium event (e.g. rugby/football matches, concerts) and we cannot reinstall until 24 hours following the event. Our programme has allowed for each planned event along with the associated standstill period; this has been continually updated as Covid-19 restrictions changed, allowing for events to go forward. We also had to plan our works around the Christmas embargo period where we were unable to impose any traffic restrictions or constraints from the end of November until mid-January.

The route through both sites is a key public transport artery through the city; approximately 85 buses per hour pass through at peak times. We worked with Cardiff Council and bus operators to establish locations for temporary bus stops and adjusted our traffic management consultation with them to accommodate bus routes. Prior to changes, we arranged for Cardiff Bus to carry out trial runs to ensure buses can navigate safely. We also liaised with Cardiff Central Station to manage access to their car park from Wood Street.

Access into neighbouring buildings must be maintained; we developed phasing plans at tender to ensure this. During the 2021 elections the adjacent BBC building required additional heavy vehicle access; we reprogrammed the works and temporarily switched to night/weekend working to accommodate their requirements.

Due to the limited space available, we have a separate materials compound to the south of the city centre; we have had to carefully manage the transport of material from the compound to site on a just-in-time basis to ensure works progress on programme.



“2020 has been a strange year, but there has been a lot of hard work put in by all involved... and the approach you have brought to the table to work together with us to overcome problems is recognised and appreciated... thank you again for all your efforts.”

Louis Wilshire,
Cardiff CC Project Manger



PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Communication with the public, site neighbours and local stakeholders has been of key importance. The projects are both adjacent to a large number of residences and businesses, as well as Cardiff Central train station and the Principality Stadium. Our PLO supports the site team in communicating with the public and is responsible for ensuring delivery of our Community Benefits Plan. We began stakeholder engagement during the preconstruction phase, holding one-to-one meetings and drop-in sessions with affected stakeholders to ensure that their needs were understood and taken into account when planning and delivering the works.

We held dedicated Traffic Management Workshops with local residents and businesses, attended by our PLO, site team and our Traffic Safety Control Officer to ensure the proposals were understood and to incorporate stakeholder needs as far as possible.

During construction we have communicated with stakeholders through the following:

- Meet the Contractor events; due to Covid-19 restrictions, these were held online.
- A project-specific website for the projects (<https://www.cardiffcentralsquare.com/>); this includes a chatbot feature for real-time communications
- Email and phone contact details for PLO and site team provided on all communications
- Site noticeboards (pictured left); these included areas that could be changed to display the latest TM phasing information.
- Newsletters and letter drops
- Site suggestion box
- Site Contact Register to record all communications and ensure timely response



COMMUNITY BENEFITS

We have set Community Benefits targets on both projects in line with Cardiff Council's Socially Responsible Procurement Policy. At Castle Street we will provide 338 weeks of Targeted Recruitment and Training (TR&T) on the scheme, and at Tudor Street we will provide 104 weeks. We have also committed that 75% of all supply chain expenditure will be within 50 miles of site.

We are working with local homeless charities the Huggard, Shelter Cymru and the Wallich on the project to help meet the Council's objective to reduce homelessness and support vulnerable people in the city. We have developed a programme of site-based fundraising activities and will be splitting the funds raised between the three charities; the first of these was a fitness challenge in February, where we raised over £500.

We have donated cable reels from the site to St Mary the Virgin Primary School in Butetown, near our material storage area. These reels are being recycled into outdoor educational play areas where the pupils can learn through play.

We developed an online career site in response to the restrictions that COVID placed on our educational outreach programme. We developed videos of our graduates and placement students, attended virtual careers fairs with local Welsh Universities, and held an interactive virtual recruitment day.

Both Cardiff Central Square and Tudor Street are registered with the Considerate Constructors scheme. To date Cardiff Central Square has scored 41/50 and Tudor Street 38/50, both above the industry standard.

SUSTAINABILITY

Both projects include construction of innovative 'rain gardens' as part of a Sustainable Drainage System; the rain gardens are planted with a variety of species that intercept rainwater and surface runoff from the highway and filter it before water enters the drainage system. The rain gardens naturally reduce pollutants, slow and reduce the amount of water entering the drainage network, reducing flood risk, while the plants reduce carbon emissions and promote biodiversity such as insects. These will be the first gardens retrofitted in a city centre location.

TRAINEES AND APPRENTICES AT CENTRAL SQUARE



Our commitment to providing training and employment opportunities has seen the recruitment of four apprentices across the two schemes, as well as two Year in Industry placements, a Trainee Engineer, Summer Placement and two Graduate Engineers.

Thomas Taylor joined the Central Square project as an Apprentice Groundworker and says of his time with us:

"My apprenticeship with Knights Brown has enabled me to gain valuable hands on skills and experience. Every day is different and I am always given opportunities to build my knowledge and experience. Cardiff Central Square is a really busy scheme to work on and no two days are the same, within my three man gang I have learnt loads about drainage and flexible road construction."

"I have even been nominated by the company for the CECA Apprentice Award and on site my team was recently awarded 'gang of the month'. I would encourage anyone thinking about an apprenticeship with Knights Brown to just do it, they are a great company to work for."